

PEOPLE & THINGS

THE way in which the Duke of Edinburgh cuts formality to a minimum on non-State occasions is marked. For instance, he appeared in a light-coloured suit and blue collar and shirt to preside at the annual meeting of the Automobile Association, and his example may number the days of morning dress and starched collar and cuffs on the platform at company meetings.

By contrast, his conduct in the chair was knowledgeable, punctilious and thoroughly informed on the affairs of the Association, and I was reminded of a great figure in the City once saying to me that "top brains are not necessarily crowned by top hats."

The Great Picture

LEONARDO'S "Last Supper" is, I suppose, by a long way the most popular picture in the world, and its recent restoration at the hands of Signor Pelliccioli has therefore been a matter of the most intense public interest.

At least one British firm—the East India merchants, Messrs. Gladstone Wyllie—contributed materials for the restoration, and Signor Pelliccioli himself, now imminently expected in London, is an old friend and admirer of this country.

Like many another Italian scholar, he has a particular regard for the fifty-odd Canalettos which were bought for the Royal collection by Consul Smith some two centuries ago; and, as technical adviser to the Royal Academy's Italian Art Exhibition of 1930 he was able to survey many other survivals of our ancestral enthusiasms.

I fancy, too, that he will be an interested visitor to the National Gallery, where an important Pollaiuolo has recently been cleaned.

Brass Sombreros

FOLLOWING the example of Sir Winston Churchill and President Eisenhower, General Franco has started "painting for pleasure."

News of his new hobby leaked out last week when "Arriba" published a three-column picture showing the Caudillo, wearing a wide-brimmed sombrero and a pin-stripe suit, working at his easel in the grounds of El Pardo, his official residence fifteen miles north of Madrid.

Working in full sunlight, with his palette firmly hooked over his left thumb, the Generalissimo was shown screwing up his eyes as he gazed appraisingly at the mountain background of his half-finished painting.

The New Master

THE Palace of El Pardo, one of Spain's smaller and more attractive royal residences, is built on a wide loop of the Manzanares River, and its grounds slope gently to the water's edge.

Forming a solid back-drop are the impressively broad shoulders of the Guadarrama Mountains—misty green in the early morning, bleached to a dull khaki by the blistering midday sun, and theatrically but briefly mauve and crimson at sundown.

In between is a vast expanse of dust-coloured scrubland, strewn with blue-grey rock and smudged with low bushes and stunted trees.

This was Velasquez country. It is now also General Franco's.

By **ATTICUS**



"The One Horn." A Red Indian brave of the 1830s.

THOSE who, like myself, have a lifelong fondness for "The Last of the Mohicans" should not miss George Catlin's pioneer paintings of Red Indians, which are now on show at the Whitechapel Art Gallery.

Catlin's pictures were painted in the 1820s and 1830s, when it was still dangerous for a white man to penetrate the Indian territories west of the Mississippi. A hundred years ago they were familiar to connoisseurs in both London and Paris; and it was from them that Europe had its first glimpse of the realities of Indian life—the Medicine Man with foxes' tails tied to his heels, the silver-haired Mandan girls, the tall poles, each with its dangling sacrifice, and the buffalo skin wigwams. All these may be seen at Whitechapel, and mingled with them, as may be judged from our illustration, are some memorable examples of human beauty.

Gracious Kennelling

AMERICAN tourists who cannot bear to be separated from their dogs often omit England from their European tour because of the severity of our quarantine restrictions. A shameless bid for the dog-lover trade is being made. I hear, in Italy's new 29,000-ton liner Cristoforo Colombo, which has just completed her maiden voyage from Genoa to New York.

Every imaginable canine comfort is provided on board—sun-deck kennels, whose tiled sections are provided with reversible beds, drinking bowls, electric light, air-conditioning and heating, an exer-

cise enclosure from which dogs may step directly into their hot and cold shower-baths, and a menu with special dishes for Borzoi and Peke.

I have no news of the accommodation provided for cats.

The Public Danger

AMONG many interesting letters on the subject of dangerous driving of 100 m.p.h. motor cars and motor-cycles, which I raised last Sunday, the most sensible suggestion comes from a Police Superintendent. He recommends different driving licences for different types of private cars and motor-cycles and he reminds me that this system exists for the pilots of aircraft.

Just for the record, last Tuesday a youth called Pembry was prosecuted at Bristol for speeding. He was fined £20 for doing 104 m.p.h. on his motor-cycle with a girl of nineteen riding pillion.

He was lucky that Bristol does not follow the example of certain South African towns where fines are calculated at £1 per mile over the speed limit!

Charles II Crept Here

THE vicissitudes of Fielding's house in Fulham throw into still higher relief the orderly transference of such a house as "St. Alban's," Hampton Court, which Mr. Theodore Cory is to present, in his will, to Twickenham Corporation.

"St. Alban's," originally built for Nell Gwynn, stands by the river's edge, on that long stretch of enamelled sward which was immortalised by Zoffany in his painting of Garrick and his friends taking tea. (For readers of THE SUNDAY TIMES it has also a nearer association, in that Garrick's own villa was for many years the home of Sir Desmond MacCarthy.)

Mr. Cory has given the house in memory of his wife, the late Winifred Graham, whose eighty-three novels, bound in cherry-red leather by Bumpus, form an imposing phalanx in the drawing-room.

The exigencies of municipal water supplies have, however, robbed "St. Alban's" of its most romantic feature—the mile-long underground passage which is reputed to have linked it to Hampton Court Palace. It is by this claustrophobic route that Charles II is said to have rejoined Nell Gwynn in moments of exuberance.

The legend, if true, suggests that the Royal suitor possessed qualities of positively mole-like endurance for the mile-long passage is barely five feet high.